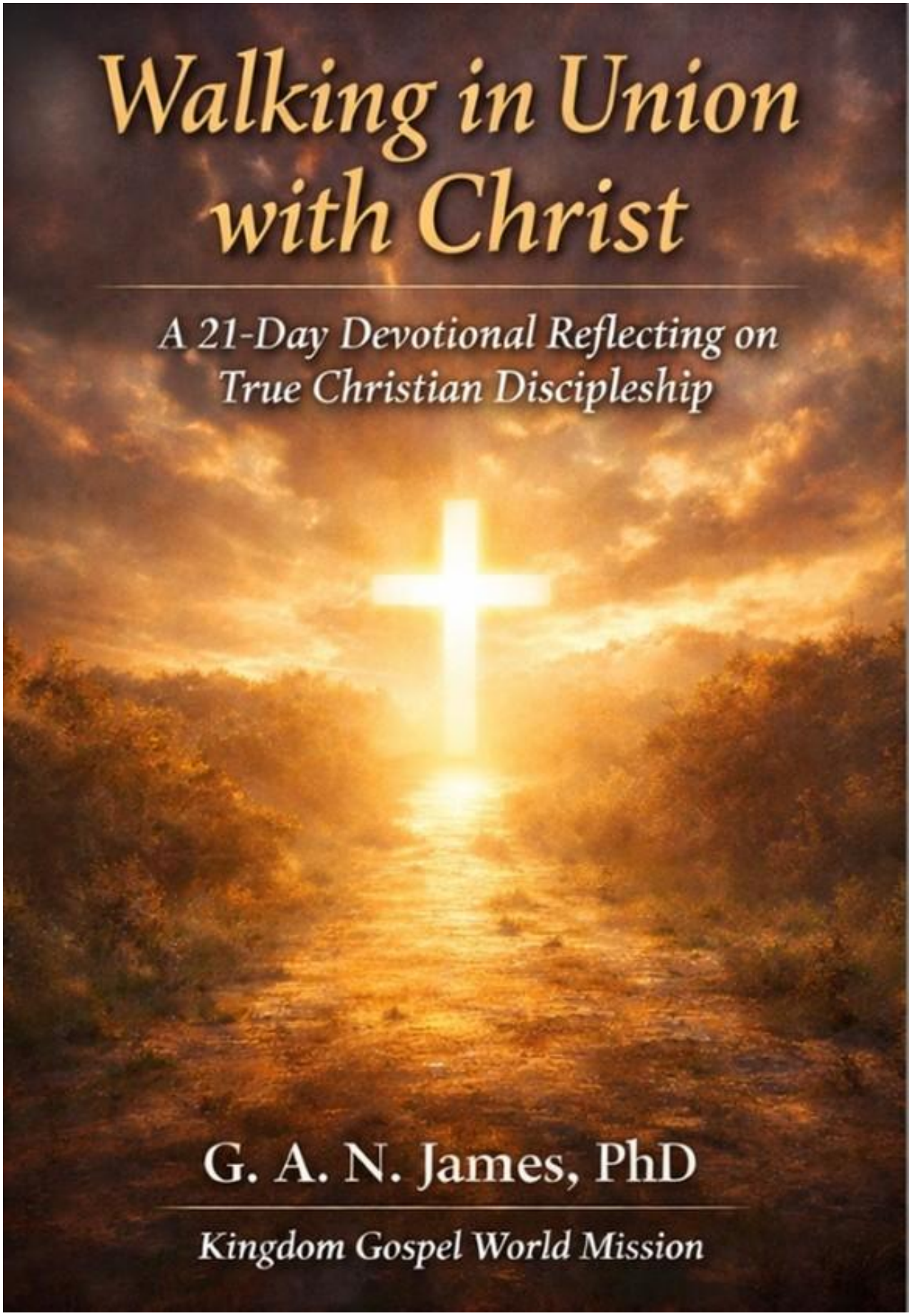
Walking in Union with Christ
A 21-Day Devotional Reflecting on True Christian Discipleship
G. A. N. James, PhD
Kingdom Gospel World Mission

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Preface

This devotional was not conceived as a religious exercise, nor as a set of daily readings designed to inspire momentary reflection. It was born out of a deep spiritual burden — to present true Christian discipleship as Jesus Himself defined it: not as self-improvement, religious effort, or gradual moral progress, but as the end of the self-life and the unveiling of the Christ-life through union with Him.

In much of contemporary Christianity, discipleship has been reduced to methods, disciplines, and behavioural models that assume the continuance of the old Adamic life. Yet the Spirit testifies plainly in Scripture that God has not sought to repair or reform the old Adamic nature, but to bring it to its end in the Cross of Christ and to replace it with an entirely new creation born of God. This devotional was written to recover that apostolic ground.

Walking in Union with Christ is therefore an invitation — not to strive, but to behold; not to achieve, but to receive; not to live for Christ, but to live from Christ. Each day unfolds one facet of the finished work of God in Christ — the believer's co-crucifixion, co-burial, and co-resurrection with Christ, indwelling life of Christ in the believer, completeness of the believer in Christ, sonship, and manifestation of the life of Christ in the believer — so that the reader may rest in what God has already accomplished and allow the Spirit to guide him or her to walk in these realities by faith.

The reflections are intentionally unhurried. They are written to be lingered over, prayed through, and quietly received through faith. This devotional does not aim to tell the reader what to do, but to gently lead him or her into seeing by the Spirit what God has already done in Christ. The exhortations at the close of each day are not prescribed prayers, but invitations into personal response before God, allowing the Spirit to minister uniquely to each heart.

It is my prayer that this devotional will serve not merely as a companion to the book *True Christian Discipleship: Living in Union with Christ*, but as a spiritual pathway by which the reader is led into rest, faith, and joyful participation in the life of the Son of God.

May the Spirit who inspired these truths also illuminate them in the hearts of those who read, for the glory of God and the building up of His elect.

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Day 1 — The Call of Jesus: What Is True Discipleship?

Scripture: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23).

Meditation

When Jesus spoke these words, He was not addressing a small group of devoted seekers, nor was He offering special instruction to an inner circle. The Scripture says, "He said to them all." His call to discipleship was not selective, hidden, or reserved for the spiritually advanced. It was a universal call, spoken openly, clearly, and with divine authority.

Yet in these few words, Jesus did something very unusual. He did not describe a path of self-improvement, moral refinement, or religious achievement. He did not say, "Learn from Me," "Serve Me," or even, "Obey Me," though all of these have their place in discipleship. Instead, He placed at the very entrance of discipleship one decisive requirement: the end of the self.

"Deny himself" does not mean to restrain sinful habits or to practice discipline. It means to agree with God's verdict on the old man. It is the acknowledgement that the nature we received from Adam — the self-nature — is not reformable, improvable, or suitable for God's purpose. God has terminated it through our union with Christ in His death. Its existence must be denied in true Christian discipleship. "Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death" (Romans 6:3)?

"Take up his cross" is not a call to endure hardship or to carry burdens bravely. The cross is not an instrument of patience or endurance; it is an instrument of execution. Jesus presents it here as an instrument for the execution of the self-nature. There is only one cross by which God has executed the self-nature. It is the Cross of Christ.

To take up the Cross is to accept God's way of dealing with the self — not by education, but by death. Through our union with Christ, the Cross of Christ was made our Cross also. Therefore, to accept the Cross of Christ as ours is to affirm that we have been crucified with Christ and our self-nature has been executed — "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live…" (Galatians 2:20).

And "follow Me" is not imitation. It is not copying Christ's behavior. It is walking in union with Him. It is the life of Christ becoming the source of our life.

In this single sentence, Jesus does not describe a program of discipleship. He unveils a reality. True discipleship does not begin with human effort. It begins with a revelation: that God does not intend to improve the self, but to replace it with Christ.

Discipleship, therefore, is not what we decide to do for Jesus. It is what God has already done for us in Christ, and what we must now spiritually acknowledge and live.

Personal Exhortation

Do not rush past Jesus' basic principles of true discipleship. Let them define you quietly. Ask yourself, not outwardly but inwardly: Have I understood discipleship as self-improvement, or as union with Christ? Have I tried to follow Jesus by my self-effort, or by yielding myself to

Him? Have I accepted the truth that God's way is not to refine my old life, but to end it and give me a new one in Christ?

Let the Spirit Himself reveal the true meaning of discipleship to you and awaken in you the consciousness of being defined by the reality of its meaning.

Day 2 — The End of Self: God's Verdict on the Old Man

Scripture: "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin" (Romans 6:6).

Meditation

One of the greatest obstacles to true Christian discipleship is not sin in its outward forms, but the belief that the self can be made suitable for Christian discipleship. From the beginning, fallen humanity has assumed that with enough knowledge of good and evil, effort, discipline, and sincerity, the old nature can be refined into something godly that God can accept. Religion has built countless systems upon this assumption.

But the gospel reveals something far more radical. God did not send His Son to improve the old man. He sent His Son to end him.

The Spirit does not say in the Scripture that our old man is being crucified, nor that he should be crucified. It declares that he was crucified with Christ. This is not a command to perform, but a fact to believe. God has already passed His final verdict on the old man, and that verdict is not education, correction, or reform — it is death. And He has executed the verdict by the Cross

This is the great offense of the Cross. It leaves no room for human pride, no place for religious self-confidence, and no hope for self-righteous improvement. The Cross proclaims that the nature we received from Adam is not merely weak but incurably unfit for God's purpose. Therefore, God did not try to repair it. He judged it and discarded it.

When Christ was crucified, God included us whom He had chosen in Him before the foundation of the world in that death. Not symbolically, but actually in His divine reckoning. "Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death" (Romans 6:3)?

Our old man was crucified with Him. This is the foundation of all true discipleship. Before we are called to follow Christ, God has already dealt with the self that cannot follow Him. Therefore, answering the call to Christian discipleship involves acknowledging the end of oneself — denying the existence of oneself — by accepting one's crucifixion with Christ.

Here lies the importance of distinguishing between experience based on human perception and the truth revealed by the Spirit, which is accepted by faith. A person may acknowledge what Scripture says while simultaneously being aware of their perception of their experiences, such as the ongoing presence of their old sin nature and the influence of sin in their life. However, it is here that the Scripture asserts that faith in the word of God, rather than human perception of experiences, should define reality: "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17). "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). This truth underscores that the righteous are called to live and walk by faith in what the word of God declares, rather than solely by human perception.

"So, then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

We will explore this vital truth some more later in the devotional. Now, it's important to accept in faith that what has happened with Christ, when He was crucified, died and buried, has also happened to you. God judged you in Him. You should believe that your nature of sin has been done away with through the Cross in the same way as your sinful deeds have been forgiven and remitted by the blood of Christ.

In experience, you may still feel the existence of your old nature and that you are in the flesh. But in truth, God says something else: the old man is finished, crucified and buried with Christ; you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. This truth is a reality revealed by the Spirit and accepted through faith.

Discipleship does not begin by trying to weaken the self. It begins by agreeing with God that the self has already been judged and put to death in Christ.

As long as a person tries to manage the self, control the self, or discipline the self, he may be sincerely religious but is ignoring God's verdict. He is reacting to human perception and not to faith in the word of God. But when he accepts the Cross as God's final word on the old man, a new kind of rest enters his life. He accepts "through the faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith" (Philippians 3:9).

The end of self is not something we accomplish. It is something we acknowledge. And this acknowledgement opens the door for a new life to replace the old self-life.

Personal Exhortation

Pause now and allow God's verdict to become personal to you — not as a doctrine, but as a reality.

Ask yourself quietly: Have I been trying to improve what God has already condemned? Have I been laboring to manage the self instead of agreeing with its death? Have I truly accepted that my old life has no future in God's purpose?

Allow the Spirit to illuminate your mind and heart with the truth that God has terminated the old self-nature through the Cross. Let Him awaken in your heart the faith to embrace restfully the righteousness of God and deny the old self-nature.

Day 3 — Crucified with Christ: The Work God Has Done

Scripture: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

Meditation

Having declared to you God's verdict on the old man, the Spirit now leads you deeper, to behold what God Himself has done for you in Christ. Here the gospel reaches its deepest point: declaring not what we are called to do, but what God has already done.

The apostle Paul does not say, "I am trying to be crucified with Christ," nor "I hope to be crucified with Christ." He speaks in the perfect tense: "I have been crucified with Christ." This is not aspiration. It is accomplished fact.

This sentence contains the very center of Christian discipleship. God did not merely crucify Christ for us. He crucified us with Him.

In the Cross of Christ, God dealt not only with our sins, but with our very nature of sin. The old man was not left outside the Cross to be disciplined later. He was brought into Christ's death and ended there.

This is where discipleship must be rooted.

As long as a person thinks of the Cross mainly as something Christ did alone, he will continue to live as an independent self, even as religious as he may be. But when the Spirit opens his eyes to see that he himself was crucified with Christ, something profound changes. He no longer stands outside the Cross. He stands inside the Cross as one who has already been crucified with Christ.

This is the difference between religion and revelation. Religion tells us to imitate Christ and carry our own cross. Revelation tells us that we have been united with Christ in His crucifixion.

The Cross, then, is not a model for suffering. It is a place of execution where God ended one life in order to make room for another — the life of Christ.

And this is why Paul can say, "It is no longer I who live." He is not speaking poetically. He is describing God's judgment on his old self-life and God's replacement with the life of Christ.

The self-life has been brought to its end. The life of Christ has taken its place.

True discipleship does not begin with trying to follow Christ better. It begins when the believer sees that he who could not follow Christ has already been crucified with Christ. And having been raised with Christ, he then sees Christ not as an example outside him, but a life within him.

Personal Exhortation

Reflect on the reality of this single truth today: "I have been crucified with Christ."

Do not turn it into a feeling. Do not try to reproduce it in experience. Let it stand as God's declaration concerning you. Allow it to generate in you living faith in its divine declaration.

Day 4 — Buried with Him: The Finality of the Past

Scripture: "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

Meditation

Having been led to behold what God has done in crucifying us with Christ, we follow the Spirit a step further — to consider what it means that we were also buried with Him.

Burial speaks of something very different from crucifixion. Crucifixion ends a life. Burial declares that the former is finished with forever. Burial confirms its permanent decease.

God did not leave the old man on the Cross to be revisited, examined, or gradually forgotten. He buried him. In burial, God removed the old life from sight, from memory, and from existence. Burial is God's declaration that the past has no future.

Many believers struggle with the proper acceptance of this truth. They may accept, in doctrine, that the old man was crucified. Yet inwardly, they continue to look back — to former failures, to former sins, to former identities, to former hopes and disappointments. They live as though something from the past must still be carried forward.

But Scripture says something far more decisive: "We were buried with Him."

Burial means that God has closed the account. He has sealed the record. He has ended all negotiation with what we were in Adam. In burial, God is not only discarding the old life. He is refusing to remember it.

This is not psychological forgetting. It is divine finality. The old history is no longer a factor in God's present work. The former self is no longer an object of God's dealings. The past is not being healed, improved, or redeemed. It has passed away. It is left behind in the grave.

Hence, all that is in the present and the future is inevitably new — newness of life. Through our union with Christ into death, we were buried with Him "that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

This truth is a great deliverance. Many believers remain bound, not by present sin, but by unburied memories. They carry guilt that God has buried. They rehearse failures that God has cancelled. They define themselves by a history that God has erased.

But where burial is truly seen, a glorious light illuminates the soul. You behold with divine clarity — "all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). United with Christ in in death and burial, your old identity has passed away, You can no longer be defined according to your former nature.

Before God who sees the genuine of your real being unlike men who judges from outward appearance, you are a new creation. He is not working on your past. He is working from your new beginning.

Discipleship forbids dragging yesterday into today. It asserts walking forward as one whose yesterday has vanished.

So, burial is God’s gift of finality. And only where there is finality can there be true newness of life.

Personal Exhortation

As you reflect on the truth of your burial with Christ, let your consciousness fully absorb the reality of this truth. Let it speak to your heart, not as a doctrine, but as a release from your past self-life.

Do not struggle to forget. Do not try to suppress memory. Simply allow God’s finality with the old to become your rest.

Day 5 — Raised with Christ: Living by Another Life

Scripture: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1).

Meditation

Crucifixion and burial, though essential, are not God's final intention. They are preparatory acts.

God does not end a life merely to leave a void. He ends one life in order to introduce another. Here the gospel reaches its glorious center: not death, but resurrection.

The Scripture does not say that we will be raised with Christ. It declares that we were raised with Him. It subsequently leads us to explore the reality of the resurrection life we have been raised into in union with Christ. We are now brought into the existential reality of true Christian discipleship.

We realize at the onset that resurrection is a present reality for disciples of Christ, not a future reward. Behind us is the old self-life, terminated by crucifixion and discarded by burial. God has "made us alive together with Christ… and raised *us* up together and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:5-6).

What confront us now are the things which are above. This is where true discipleship begins in its positive form. What, then, are "the things which are above" that now confront us in this resurrection life?

Clearly, we are confronted by a new center of life: Christ Himself as our present Lord and indwelling life. The apostle does not say merely that Christ is above, but that "your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3). Resurrection does not lift us into religious aspiration; it brings us into living union with Christ and in Christ. The supreme "thing above" is not a doctrine, a vision, or a moral ideal, but a Person who now lives in us. Paul could therefore say with quiet finality, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

In resurrection life, the believer is no longer governed by self as the source of thought, desire, and strength. He is daily confronted by the gentle but firm reality that another Life is now being expressed in him. This is not mystical abstraction; it is the practical walk of true Christian discipleship in union with Christ. Christ's mind, Christ's meekness, Christ's obedience, and Christ's love become the actual substance of living and walking.

Living above means being confronted by a new realm of values and affections. "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2). Resurrection does not remove us from earthly responsibilities, but it gives us a new heart with new priorities. The "things above" are not clouds and visions; they are the values of the heavenly kingdom now ruling the inner man. Love replaces rivalry, humility displaces self-importance, purity overcomes hidden compromise, and eternal purpose outweighs temporary advantages.

Jesus Himself defined this realm when He said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). In resurrection life, the heart is loosened from what is temporal and

fastened to what is eternal. This inclination is gentle but discerning: each day reveals what truly governs us — obedience rather than ambition, faithfulness rather than reputation, communion with God rather than pursuit of things which are on earth. This does not imply an ongoing struggle to choose. It is the divine expression of spiritually discerned priorities of the risen life.

In essence, true Christian discipleship is living by the risen life of Christ. It is Christ Himself living in the believer. Paul declares: "Christ lives in me" — not influences me, not helps me, not encourages me, but lives in me,

True Christian disciples are not trying to imitate Christ by modifying worldly lifestyles to adapt to the things which are above but allowing the heavenly life of Christ to define their walk on earth in the midst of the world. This is active discipleship. It is not activity driven by human zeal, but activity flowing from the risen life of Christ above.

Yet as the believer begins to walk in the resurrection life of Christ and explore the glories of the heavenly realm where he is seated with Christ, another quiet question often arises — one that touches not doctrine, but inward experience. *"If all this is true, why does my experience still seem otherwise?"* It is to this question that the Spirit of God now turns in the next meditation.

Personal Exhortation

Having been raised with Christ, you are exhorted to "set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2). This is not psychological persuasion or force. Raised up in union with Christ, you have the heavenly focused mind of Christ.

Remain restfully where God has placed you in Christ, sitting at the right hand of God. The Spirit and life of Christ in you will generate in your mind and heart the heavenly desire and pursuit for the things which are above.

The things above confront you not with abstractions, but with the resurrected Christ as your life, heaven's values in your heart, divine power in your weakness, holy purpose in your daily path, and the divine essence of true Christian discipleship lived in union with Christ. You are following Christ on earth, not by imitation, but by the reality of His resurrection life expressed in you through your union with Him in the heaven.

Day 6 — Walking by Faith in the Word of God, Not by Perception of Experience

Scripture: "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Meditation

One of the most subtle yet powerful hindrances to walking in union with Christ is the unexamined assumption that personal experience is a reliable interpreter of spiritual truth. Many people sincerely affirm what Scripture declares but inwardly interpret their spiritual condition through what they feel, observe, or perceive within themselves. Whereas God intends the righteous to walk by faith and not by sight, they walk oppositely — by sight and not by faith. This tension often surfaces quietly, without words: *"I believe what God says… but my experience seems to tell a different story."*

Scripture does not ignore this struggle; it addresses it at the level of its true cause. The problem is not merely that human experience can be inconsistent with spiritual truth. The problem is that the natural mind — no matter how sincere or religious — is incapable of discerning spiritual reality. As the apostle Paul declares, *"The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God… because they are spiritually discerned."* This means that even honest, intense, or recurring experiences, when interpreted through natural perception, cannot represent what is true in the realm of the Spirit.

Spiritual discernment is vital for anyone walking the path of discipleship. To be born again of the Spirit into a spirit-being with a spiritual mind is fundamental to be a true Chrisian disciple and discern spiritual reality. Though Scripture declares that the old man has been crucified, buried, and replaced by a new creation in Christ, the believer may still *feel* the presence of old patterns, thoughts, or impulses. How does a believer treat these experiences that are inconsistent with what God has revealed?

The Spirit of God establishes a higher authority. Reality for the believer is defined not by perception, but by revelation. Romans 1:16–17 declares that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes, and in it *"the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'"* This is not merely a statement about justification; it is a governing principle for the Christian life. The righteous are called to live, walk, and interpret their spiritual condition by faith in what God has revealed to their spiritual mind, not by conclusions drawn from natural experience.

Living by faith does not mean denying the awareness of experience. It means refusing to grant experience the authority to define truth. Faith acknowledges what is felt, but subjects what is felt to what God has spoken. Faith does not argue with experience; it simply places experience under the light of divine revelation and the reality discerned by the spiritual mind.

This is especially crucial in matters concerning the self-life and the new creation in Christ. If human experience is allowed to rule and define reality, a religious person who perceives the experiences of self as reality by the natural mind will continually attempt to correct, manage,

or suppress what God has already judged and ended in the Cross. This is evident in religious behaviour. Such a person walks by sight and not by faith. He perceives reality by what he sees or feels, and not by faith in what the word of God declares. But when revelation discerned by the spiritual mind governs, the believer rests in God's verdict and by faith accepts the reality of the end of self and its replacement by the new spiritual man in Christ.

Here the Spirit invites the believer into a deeper form of trust — not trust in progress, but trust in truth. Not trust in human perception, but trust in God's Word. The Christian life was never meant to be lived by the natural mind's perception of human experience but by the Spirit's revelation of the reality of the indwelling Christ-life. The true disciple of Christ walks by faith in the spiritual reality of his union with Christ and the end of self, according to the revelation of the word of God.

This shift from living by the natural mind's perception of human experience to living by the Spirit's revelation of being indwelt by the life of Christ is profoundly liberating. Jesus Christ declared in John 8:31-32: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The true Christian disciple is rooted in Christ and governed by His word.

When revelation takes precedence over human perception of experience, the soul is free from the exhausting task of struggling with the perceived self-life. It finds power, peace, and rest in the liberating truth that the old self-life has been discarded and replaced by the holy life of Christ. The believer boldly declares quietly and confidently, *"Let God be true, and every perception be subject to His truth."*

A Quiet Exhortation

Pause here and allow the Spirit to show you where you may have been interpreting your life in Christ primarily through experience rather than through revelation. Notice this without judgment. Gently yield your perceptions to the authority of God's Word.

Do not strive to reconcile experience with truth. Simply allow truth to stand. As you do, remain attentive to the Spirit, who delights to bear witness within you to what God has already declared. Rest there. This is the posture of faith.

Day 7 — Following Christ: Union, Not Imitation

Scripture: "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:6).

Meditation

Now that the Spirit has led the believer fully into the consciousness of having been dead, buried, and resurrected in union with Christ, the meaning of "following Christ" in true Christian discipleship must be seen afresh.

Following Christ is not imitation of Christ. It is to live and walk in union with Christ. When Jesus describes discipleship, He does not begin with imitation of Him, but with termination of self. "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). Self-denial and the Cross are not moral exercises; they are the spiritual means by which self is terminated as the governing center of life. Self-denial is not human effort to deprive and control self. The Cross is not human endurance of suffering and hardship. The Cross does not improve the "I"; it eliminates it. In this light, discipleship cannot be the "I" striving to copy Christ's example, for the very "I" that would imitate is the one Christ calls to be denied and crucified.

Following Christ, therefore, is not an "I" walking behind Jesus, trying to resemble Him. It is an entrance with Him — following Him — through death into His resurrection life. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Discipleship begins where self ends and continues where Christ lives. The disciple does not follow Christ by imitation of His life, but by participation in His life. Crucified and buried with Christ, he lives and walks in union with Christ in His resurrection life.

Religion has taught believers to copy Christ's behavior, to study His actions, and to reproduce His virtues. This approach assumes that the Christian life is lived by the old human life trying to imitate a perfect model. This has led to much frustration in self-effort in religious pursuit of Christianity.

But Scripture reveals something far deeper. We do not follow Christ by observing Him from a distance. We follow Christ by abiding in Him — being in union with Him. The apostle does not say, "He who studies Christ should walk as He walked," but "He who abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."

Here the source of power in discipleship is not human effort but abiding in Christ. Abiding in Christ means living in union with Christ. It means living by the life of Christ. It means that the same life that is in Christ is in the believer.

This is why imitation of Christ is insufficient for true Christian discipleship. Imitation works from the outside. Union works from the inside out. In imitation, the believer asks, "What would Jesus do?" He then attempts to do what he perceives Jesus would do. In union with Christ, the believer walks by what Jesus is now doing in him.

The Christian life is a life of Christ being expressed by Christ Himself in believers. And discipleship is not learning and striving to behave like Jesus. It is letting Jesus live His life in

us. Here obedience is transformed. We no longer obey the Lord by forcing ourselves to do what He commands. We obey the Lord by yielding to His Life that naturally does what is what is well-pleasing to Him.

This is why Jesus said: “Abide in Me, and I in you.” Not imitate Me. Not study Me. Not struggle to follow Me. Abide in me. "I am the true Vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

Here discipleship becomes restful movement. Not effort striving to reach Christ, but Christ moving freely through the believer. This is the secret of following Him in discipleship — walking in union with Him.

Personal Exhortation

Be conscious of your union with Christ. Let this one reality fill your awareness: Christ is not before you as a model. He is in you and you are in Him.

Reflect deeply on the truth: Christ is within you as your life. Stand in this truth. Walk in this truth. And allow His life to order and define yours.

Day 8 — The Call That Ends One Life and Begins Another in Christ

Scripture: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Meditation

True Christian discipleship does not begin with improvement, resolution, or commitment. It begins with an ending. This is the truth that quietly unsettles the religious mind but liberates the heart that has grown weary of striving to serve the Lord. When Scripture declares that anyone who is in Christ is a new creation, it is not announcing a gradual moral upgrade or a slow spiritual evolution. It is proclaiming that something decisive has taken place — something final, irreversible, and entirely the work of God.

To be *in Christ* is to have crossed out of one realm of existence and into another. It is not merely a change of beliefs or behavior, but a passage from death to life. The old life — the life derived from Adam, sustained by self-effort, defined by independence from God — has reached its appointed end. God did not reform that life, nor did He attempt to educate or rehabilitate it. He brought it to its conclusion in the death of His Son. The Cross was not only the place where sins were forgiven; it was the place where the old human story was brought to an end.

This is why discipleship cannot be understood rightly until this ending is seen and embraced. As long as a person believes that the Christian life is about making the old self better, stronger, or more disciplined, discipleship to him will feel burdensome, demanding, and often discouraging. The soul will be pulled between aspiration and inability, desire and frustration. But when the Spirit opens the heart to see that God has already ended the old life and introduced a new one in Christ, something profound happens: striving gives way to rest, and effort gives way to grace.

The new creation is not the old creation behaving differently. It is not Adam trying earnestly to live like Christ. It is Christ Himself becoming the life of the believer. *"That which is born of the Spirit is spirit"* (John 3:6). The new creature is born of God, not of human will or resolve. This means that the source of life has changed. The believer no longer lives from himself, but from Christ. The center has shifted. Identity, strength, desire, and direction now flow from a new origin in Christ.

This is why Scripture speaks so boldly: *"Old things have passed away."* This passing away is not merely psychological or emotional; it is spiritual and ontological. The former way of existing — the self as the center, the natural mind as the authority, the human will as the driver — has lost its claim. A new existence has begun, one defined not by selfhood but by union with Christ. The believer now lives *in Christ*, and Christ lives *in the believer*. This is not partnership with Christ. It is participation in the life of Christ. Not cooperation with Christ, but communion with Christ.

Discipleship, therefore, is not the process of becoming something new over time; it is the discovery and outworking of what God has already made new in Christ. Growth is real, but it is the growth of awareness, understanding, and expression — not the gradual replacement of

the old with the new. The new has already come. The old has already gone. Faith does not try to make this true; faith agrees that it is true.

Here, in today's meditation on this devotional journey, the Spirit gently invites the reader to stop asking, *"How can I follow Christ better?"* and to begin asking, *"What has God already done in Christ?"* This shift is everything. It relocates discipleship from the realm of human effort to the realm of divine accomplishment. It anchors the soul not in what must still be done, but in what has already been finished.

To walk in union with Christ is to live from this beginning. Not toward self-improvement, but from new creation. Not driven by religious ambition but empowered by divine life. Not trying to follow Christ outwardly but allowing Christ to live His life inwardly.

Personal Exhortation

Pause here, not to analyze, but to behold. Allow the Spirit to gently bring you face to face with what God has already done in Christ. Lay aside every thought of self-improvement, human effort, or religious resolve. Ask the Father to show you that He has already brought the old way of living to an end in His Son.

Do not rush to act. Do not strive to change. Simply open your heart before God and let Him confirm within you the truth of your new creation in Christ. As light comes, yield to it. As peace settles, rest in it. Let your response rise naturally — as worship, as surrender, as quiet trust — knowing that true discipleship begins not with what you promise God, but with what God has already accomplished for you in Christ.

Day 9 — God's Execution of His Verdict on the Old Man

Scripture: "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin" (Romans 6:6).

Meditation

One of the greatest obstacles to true Christian discipleship is not sin in its outward forms, but misunderstanding God's decisive judgment upon the self-life. Many people sincerely desire to follow Christ, yet they carry within them an unspoken assumption: that the self can be managed, disciplined, educated, or gradually brought into submission to the Lord. Scripture confronts this assumption directly and unequivocally. God did not place the self-life under reform; He placed it under the Cross.

The self-life — what Scripture calls "the old man" — is not merely a collection of wrong habits or flawed tendencies. It is an entire mode of existence inherited from Adam: a life centered in self, sustained by self, and ultimately opposed to God. This life may appear religious, moral, disciplined, and even zealous for spiritual things, yet it remains fundamentally independent of God. Because of this, it is void of the life of God. It cannot be healed or sanctified. It must be brought to an end.

Romans 6:6 does not say that the old man *should be* crucified, nor that he *must be* crucified through effort or discipline. It declares that he *was* crucified with Christ. This is God's verdict, not man's aspiration. When Christ died, God included the old Adamic life in that death. The Cross, therefore, stands as the divine termination point of the self-life. Everything that derived its identity, strength, and direction from Adam was gathered up and brought to its conclusion in Christ's crucifixion.

This truth is not intuitive to the natural mind. The self does not feel crucified. It often appears very much alive, asserting opinions, defending itself, striving to be spiritual, and seeking recognition — even in the pursuit of discipleship. But faith does not take its cues from appearance or feeling. Faith rests in what God has declared true. To "know this," as Paul writes, is to allow the Spirit to anchor the heart in God's finished work rather than in personal experience.

Here we touch something deeply liberating. As long as a person believes he must *kill* the self, discipleship becomes exhausting and inwardly unattainable. The soul oscillates between resolve and failure, determination and discouragement. But when the Spirit reveals that the self has already been crucified in Christ, the burden lifts. The believer is no longer trying to bring about an end that God has already accomplished. He awakens to the reality of standing in the accomplished work of the Cross.

The purpose of this crucifixion is clearly stated: *"that we should no longer be slaves of sin."* Slavery to sin does not end through self-control alone; it ends when the master is removed. Sin's authority rested upon the old man. When the old man was crucified, sin lost its rightful claim. Freedom does not come by strengthening the self against sin, but by the removal of the self as sin's base of operation. This is why Scripture consistently presents freedom as an outcome of death and resurrection in Christ, not of struggle and suppression.

It is crucial to see that this end of the self-life involves a radical change of personhood and identity. The old has been annihilated and a totally new person has come into existence. The old "I" that sought life from itself has been replaced by a new "I" that lives from Christ. This is why Paul can say, without contradiction, *"I have been crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live — yet not I, but Christ lives in me"* (Galatians 2:20). The self as a person existing independently of the life of God has ended, but a new person living by the life of God has taken over — Christ lives in me, defines my new personhood and identity.

Discipleship, then, does not begin with trying to deny the self; it begins with seeing that the self has already been denied by God. The daily Christian walk is not a repeated execution, but a constant *reckoning* — a permanent alignment of the heart with God's verdict. We do not fight the self; we deny its claim. We do not reform it; we do not live from it. We do not suppress it; we abide in Christ, from whom a different life flows.

This is why the Cross is not merely an event in history, but a present spiritual reality. It is the ground upon which the disciple stands. From this ground, where the old self has been executed to give way to newness of life in the resurrected Christ, obedience becomes natural rather than forced, humility becomes genuine rather than cultivated, and service becomes an expression of the indwelling life of Christ rather than a performance for God.

Here, the Spirit invites the reader to relinquish a hidden burden: the responsibility of managing the self. God has already carried that responsibility to the Cross. What remains is not effort, but faith; not striving, but surrender; not self-discipline but abiding in the resurrected Christ as the new and only source of life.

Personal Exhortation

Remain for a moment with this truth before God. Allow the Spirit to show you where your feelings may still be moving you to try to improve, restrain, or manage a self-life that God has already judged and ended in Christ. Gently release that burden. Let your heart agree with God's verdict, even where your feelings hesitate.

Do not attempt to apply this truth. Let it apply itself to you. As light dawns, simply yield to it. As rest comes, remain there. This is not a loss, but a great gain — the freedom of no longer living from yourself, but from Christ who lives in you.

Day 10 — Denying Self: Agreeing with God's Finished Work

Scripture: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

Meditation

When Jesus spoke of denying oneself, He was not calling His disciples to a life of inner struggle, continual suppression, or moral self-policing. Nor was He asking them to engage in heroic acts of willpower against their own nature. Rather, He was pointing them toward a revelation — one that would only later be fully understood in the light of the Cross. To deny oneself is not to struggle against the self; it is to agree with God that the self-life has already come to its end in Christ through the Cross.

The human mind instinctively understands denial as resistance. We imagine denial as pushing something away, restraining desire, or silencing an inner voice. But spiritual denial, as Jesus intends it, is of an entirely different order. It is not resistance to the self; it is relinquishment of the self's claim to existence in one's life. To deny oneself is to acknowledge the end of oneself and recognize the rule and reign of Christ in one's life.

Paul's words in Galatians 2:20 capture this reality with striking clarity. *"I have been crucified with Christ."* This is not a future hope or an ongoing struggle; it is a completed fact. Paul does not say, "I am crucifying myself," nor does he say, "I must learn how to die." He speaks of something that has already happened, something accomplished by God through Christ's death. The denial of self begins here — not with effort, but with revelation.

Yet Paul goes further. He says, *"It is no longer I who live."* This statement is not poetic exaggeration. It is the language of a man who has seen the end of one life and the beginning of another. The "I" that once lived independently of God — the self that sought righteousness, meaning, and strength from itself — has been done away with. In its place, a new life has taken up residence. *"Christ lives in me."*

This is the heart of denying self. Guidance for one's walk is no longer drawn from personal wisdom, emotional strength, or moral resolve. It flows from Christ. The self is denied not because it is resisted, but because it no longer exists.

This is why Jesus could say, *"Whoever loses his life for My sake will find it"* (Matthew 16:25). The life that is lost is the self-life that cannot inherit the Kingdom. The life that is found is Christ's own life, freely given to those whose self has been crucified with Christ. Discipleship, therefore, is the loss of the self-life and discovery of the Christ-life.

In this light, discipleship becomes beautifully simple. The believer is not asked to deny self in order to become spiritual; he is invited to recognize that God has already removed what stood in the way of true spiritual life. The path forward is not self-denial as effort, but self-forgetfulness as Christ has become central.

Here, the Spirit invites the reader into a profound and radical shift: away from self-conscious living and into Christ-conscious living. Away from asking, *"How am I doing?"* and into resting in the truth, *"Christ is living and doing in me."* This is not carelessness; it is

faithfulness. It is not passivity; it is active faith. It is the quiet confidence that the One who began this work will also sustain and express it.

Personal Exhortation

Stay with this truth before God without trying to measure your experience by it. Allow the Spirit to show you where denial of self may have been understood as struggle rather than surrender. Gently release any pressure to manage your inner life and let Christ take His rightful place as your life. Do not force agreement; let agreement arise as the light of the truth shines in your heart. Remain here, attentive and unhurried. This is the way of true discipleship — Christ living in you, and you resting in Him.

Day 11 — Elimination of the Old Life: Emergence of New Life

Scripture: "Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

Meditation

Death, by itself, speaks of an ending; burial speaks of finality. Scripture does not stop at declaring that we died with Christ — it goes further and tells us that we were buried with Him. This truth carries immense spiritual weight, yet it is often overlooked. Burial means that what has died is no longer meant to be revisited, recovered, or reconsidered. God did not merely put the old life to death and leave it exposed; He laid it to rest.

To be buried with Christ is to be removed from the realm where the old life once operated. Burial marks separation. When something is buried, it is no longer accessible, no longer consulted, no longer given influence. In God's reckoning, the old Adamic life — the self that lived apart from Him, reasoned independently, and sought life from itself — has been placed beyond recall. The Cross ended it; burial sealed it.

This is where many believers struggle, not because the truth is unclear, but because the implications are so thorough. There is something in the human heart that wishes to keep a connection to the old life, even while desiring the new. We may accept death in theory yet resist burial in practice. Death allows for the possibility of remembrance; burial insists on release. But God, in His wisdom and mercy, has given us burial so that we may be free.

Romans 6:4 does not present burial as an experience we must strive to enter, but as a reality already accomplished *with Christ*. Baptism here is not primarily a ritual; it is a spiritual identification. God has placed the believer into Christ's death so fully that burial followed as a natural consequence. The old life was not only ended; it was put away.

Why is this important? Because as long as one believes the old life is still present in some essential way, discipleship remains conflicted to him. The heart wavers between two grounds of living — sometimes striving to live from Christ, sometimes slipping back into self-dependence. Burial resolves this tension by declaring that there is no going back. The old ground has been removed. Only one ground remains: resurrection life.

Yet burial is not an end in itself. Scripture immediately joins burial to resurrection: *"that just as Christ was raised… even so we also should walk in newness of life."* Burial clears the ground; resurrection introduces a new walk. God never leaves us in emptiness. What He removes, He replaces. What He ends, He surpasses. The newness of life is not the old life improved, but an entirely different life — life derived from Christ Himself.

This new walk does not emerge from effort, but from identity. We walk in newness of life because we *are* new. We live differently because we exist differently. The believer no longer draws from memory, habit, or self-reference, but from the indwelling Christ. The old life is not restrained beneath the surface; it is buried. The new life is not struggling to emerge; it has already sprung forth.

Here the Spirit addresses a subtle but persistent temptation: the temptation to revisit the old life for reference, security, or identity. We may find ourselves asking, *"Why do I still think this way?"* or *"Why do old patterns appear?"* But Scripture invites us to shift the question. Instead of measuring reality by appearance, we measure it by God's declaration. Faith does not deny the presence of memory or habit; it denies their authority to define present reality. Burial means they no longer define who we are or how we live.

Discipleship, then, becomes a matter of orientation rather than correction. We are not trying to repair what God has buried; we are walking in what God has raised. The Spirit turns our gaze away from the grave and toward the risen Christ. The awakening of our consciousness of His presence in us nullifies our interest in the old life.

Burial with Christ is God's seal of finality. It is His way of assuring us that the old chapter is truly closed. There is no unfinished business in the grave. There is no hidden potential waiting to be recovered. The future lies entirely on the resurrection side of the Cross.

Personal Exhortation

Remain for a while with this truth before God. Allow the Spirit to establish in your mind the reality of the burial of your old nature with Christ. Do not struggle to forget the past; simply turn toward the reality that the life you now live is the resurrection life of Christ. Let your heart rest in the finality of God's work. Stay here in stillness. The grave is behind you. Newness of life lies within you and defines your present identity.

Day 12 — Walking in Newness of Life

Scripture: "Even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

Meditation

If death and burial speak of God's decisive ending of the old life, resurrection speaks of His glorious beginning of an entirely new one. The Christian life is not meant to be lived on the edge of the grave, constantly revisiting what has been buried. It is meant to be lived on resurrection ground. God did not bring us through death and burial merely to free us from the past; He did so in order to introduce us into a new realm of life — His own life, shared with us in Christ.

Resurrection is not simply the reversal of death; it is the emergence of a life of a completely different order. When Christ was raised from the dead, He did not return to His former mode of earthly existence. He rose in the power of an indestructible life: "Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him" (Romans 6:9). This resurrection life is the very life into which the believer has been brought. We are not striving toward resurrection; we have been raised with Christ to live in it.

This is why Paul does not say that we *should try* to walk in newness of life, but that we *should walk* in it—as a natural consequence of what has already taken place. Newness of life is not a moral ideal; it is a present reality. It is not something we achieve by effort, but something we express by abiding. The life that now quickens the believer is not Adam's life disciplined by religion, but Christ's risen life imparted by the Spirit.

Yet many who profess to be believers struggle here, not because resurrection life is weak, but because they still attempt to live it from an old posture of self-effort. They try to *use* resurrection truth rather than *live in* resurrection life. This subtle shift makes all the difference. Resurrection life cannot be managed, directed, or activated by the self. It flows only where the self has been laid aside as a source of life.

Walking in newness of life means living in a new center. The governing principle of the Christian life is no longer *"What should I do?"* but *"What is the source of my life?"* When the source is Christ, obedience is no longer strained. Love is no longer forced. Holiness is no longer a burden. These things become expressions of life rather than demands placed upon it.

The resurrection life of Christ is not fragile. It does not need to be protected by constant vigilance or sustained by intense effort. It is resilient, sufficient, and self-sustaining because its source is the Eternal God Himself. Scripture describes this life as *"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"* (Romans 8:2). A law here is an active principle that operates consistently, quietly, and without strain. It does not require encouragement to function; it simply does what it is designed by nature to do — for example, the law of gravity.

This is why discipleship, when rightly understood, is restful. It is not passive, but it is peaceful. The believer is no longer driven by fear of failure or the pressure to maintain spiritual performance. He is trusting the life of Christ within him. The true Christian disciple walks in the spontaneous flow of the life of Christ responding to God, to others, and to circumstances directed by the Spirit of life in Christ rather than out of self-calculation.

Walking in newness of life also means that the past no longer dictates the future. Resurrection life is not an extension of what was; it is the introduction of what never existed before. The believer's history in Adam does not define his destiny in Christ. Weaknesses, failures, and former limitations lose their authority. They may still appear as memories or habits, but they no longer have the power to determine identity or direction. The life now at work is greater than the life that was laid down.

This newness of life is not something the believer must constantly remind himself to produce. It is the life that the believer now lives in Christ. Now abiding in Christ, the true Vine, the believer is a branch in which the resurrection life of Christ naturally expresses itself. This is not a technique to be mastered, but a relationship to be trusted.

Resurrection life is not merely power for service; it is life for living and walking by faith. It governs thought, emotion, response, and desire. It shapes how we face temptation, conflict, suffering, and joy. It anchors the soul not in circumstance, but in Christ Himself. This is the life God intended for us when He raised us up and made us sit in His Son in the heavenly realms — and it is the life Christ now shares with us who are in Him.

Personal Exhortation

Remain for a while in the light of this truth. Do not attempt to walk in newness of life by resolve. Simply yield to the life of Christ that is already within you. As you rest there, notice how the Spirit brings simplicity, confidence, and peace to you. This is the flow of resurrection life in you.

Day 13 — Complete in Christ: Resting in God's Finished Work

Scripture: "And you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power" (Colossians 2:10).

Meditation

One of the quiet burdens many who profess to be believers carry is the sense of incompleteness — the feeling that something essential is still missing, still developing, still awaiting attainment. This sense often drives endless effort in religious works: more discipline, more knowledge, more devotion, more resolve. Yet Scripture speaks with striking clarity and simplicity: *"You are complete in Him."* Not becoming complete. Not moving toward completion. Complete.

This statement does not flatter the ego; it silences it. It means that nothing essential is lacking and left for the believer to add in what God has done. The new creation brought forth in Christ is whole, finished, and fully supplied from the moment of its birth. God does not create partially. What He brings forth in Christ bears the fullness of Christ as its source.

To be complete in Christ is to live in sufficiency rather than deficiency. The believer no longer approaches God from a sense of lack, but from the fullness already given. This fullness is not personal ability or spiritual attainment; it is Christ Himself. *"In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily"* (Colossians 2:9), and the believer's completeness flows directly from being joined to Him. Union with Christ, not effort to attain, is the ground of the believer's sufficiency.

Much confusion in discipleship arises when growth is mistaken for completion. Growth is real and necessary, but it is not the process of becoming complete. It is the process of the believer's growth in the knowledge of Christ and the dimensions of his inherited completeness in Him. Just as a child is fully human from birth yet grows in awareness and expression, so the believer is fully new in Christ and grows in understanding, confidence, and manifestation of that new life. Growth does not add what is missing; it reveals what is present.

When completeness in Christ is misunderstood, discipleship subtly shifts toward self-effort attainment. It is perceived as a working *toward* something that God says He has already given by grace in Christ. This creates religious strain, comparison, and inward pressure. But when the Spirit reveals completeness as a present reality, striving gives way to gratitude, and ambition gives way to rest. The believer does not labour to qualify for fullness; he abides in it in Christ.

This completeness is grounded not in the believer's faithfulness, but in Christ's headship. Scripture emphasizes that Christ is *"the head of all principality and power."* This means that nothing — spiritual or natural — lies outside His authority. The life the believer now lives is held within Christ's sovereign rule. There is no competing power, no hidden deficiency, no unmet requirement left to be addressed. The believer's life is enclosed within Christ's victory and sufficiency.

Here again, the Spirit dismantles the illusion of self-reliance. Completeness in Christ means that the believer does not need to supplement Christ with self-effort, personal wisdom, or religious performance. What Christ supplies is enough. What He has finished does not require assistance. The believer's calling is not to improve upon God's work, but to trust it.

This truth profoundly shapes how discipleship is lived day by day. Obedience flows not from anxiety to measure up, but working out what God works in the believer to will and do for His good pleasure. Service arises not from obligation, but from outflow of the Christ-life from within.

To rest in completeness does not produce passivity; it produces stability. The believer is not active, not self-focused, not driven by fear of inadequacy. Instead, there is a deep quietness of heart — a settled assurance that life is being carried by Christ well pleasingly before God.

Completeness in Christ also guards the believer against spiritual comparison. When fullness is already given, there is no need to measure oneself against others. Each disciple lives from the same source, supplied by the same life, governed by the same Lord. Diversity of expression does not threaten unity, because unity rests in shared in the same life that is in Christ. Scripture reminds us: "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit" (1Corinthians 12:13).

Here, the Spirit invites the reader into rest — not the rest of inactivity, but the rest of confidence. It is the confidence that God has not left anything undone; the confidence that Christ is enough; the confidence that discipleship is not a journey toward fullness, but a walk within it.

Personal Exhortation

Without forcing release, turn your heart again toward Christ as your fullness. Let gratitude replace effort. Let rest replace urgency. Remain quietly before God, allowing the truth of your completeness in Christ to settle deeply. From this place, life will flow naturally and fruit will appear in its time.

Day 14 — Chosen and Appointed: Discipleship in God's Sovereign Will

Scripture: "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16).

Meditation

At the heart of true Christian discipleship lies a truth that both humbles and comforts the soul: discipleship begins with God, not with us. Jesus' words leave no room for ambiguity. He does not say, "You chose well," or "You followed Me faithfully." He says, *"You did not choose Me."* In doing so, He gently removes discipleship from the unstable ground of human decision and places it securely within the eternal will of God.

This truth does not diminish the importance of faith or obedience; rather, it reveals their true source. Our response to Christ is real, but it is not primary. Behind every genuine godly response stands a prior divine initiative. Before the disciple ever desired Christ, Christ had already desired the disciple. Before the heart reached out, grace had already reached in. Discipleship, therefore, does not begin with human willingness, but with divine choosing.

This revelation brings rest where there has often been pressure. If discipleship depended upon the strength of our choosing, it would remain fragile, vulnerable to fatigue, doubt, and failure. But because it rests upon God's choosing, it is upheld by His faithfulness. The security of the disciple is found not in the constancy of his commitment, but in the certainty of Christ's call. What God begins, He sustains.

Jesus does not stop at choosing; He speaks also of appointing. *"I chose you and appointed you."* God's sovereign choice is never aimless. It always moves toward specific expression. To be appointed by Christ is to be placed into a divine purpose that unfolds from within union with Him, not from external assignment. The appointment is not first to labor, but to fruitfulness. Fruit is not produced by exertion; it is borne by life.

Here again, the distinction between partnership and union becomes clear. In a partnership, responsibility is shared. In union with Christ, the life of Christ is shared. Christ does not appoint His disciples to produce fruit by effort, but to bear fruit by abiding in Him and living by His life. The fruit that flows from this appointment is said to *remain*. It carries permanence because its source is the eternal life of Christ, not human activity. What God brings forth through His Son is not temporary or fragile; it endures.

This sovereign initiative also shapes how prayer is understood. Jesus links fruitfulness with asking the Father in His name. Prayer, in this context, is not an attempt to persuade God, but an expression of alignment with His will. When the disciple abides in Christ, and Christ abides in the disciple, desires are shaped according to the will of God. Asking becomes agreement. Requests arise from the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ within rather than independent desire.

The disciple no longer needs to discover his purpose through introspection or comparison. His purpose is already established in Christ. Fruitfulness is not something he must chase; it is something God has ordained and produces from the life of Christ within the believer. The

believer's role is not to generate outcomes, but to remain in the life from which outcomes flow.

This truth also guards against pride and despair alike. There is no room for pride, because the calling did not originate in us. There is no place for despair, because the outcome does not depend on us. God's sovereignty becomes not a threat to freedom, but the ground of it. The disciple is free from the pressure to prove his usefulness, and free to simply live through Christ.

Personal Exhortation

Today, the Spirit invites you to lay down a hidden weight: the responsibility of securing your own spiritual future. That future is already held in God's choosing and appointment. You did choose and appointed yourself. The Lord has chosen you and appointed to go forth to live a fruitful life in Him. Your discipleship unfolds not as a fragile human project, but as a divine work carried forward by grace.

Remain quietly before God and allow this truth to settle into your heart. Let your heart rest in the assurance that you are not sustaining your discipleship — God is. As confidence in His sovereign choosing grows, allow gratitude and trust to take the place of pressure. Stay here for a while, resting in the One who chose you, appointed you, and remains faithful to complete His work.

Day 15 — Abiding in Christ: Living from the Indwelling Life

Scripture: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me" (John 15:4).

Meditation

At this point in our journey, the Spirit leads us away from concepts and into posture. Having seen the end of the self-life, the reality of burial and resurrection, the completeness of the believer in Christ, and God's sovereign initiative in choosing disciples, we now arrive at a truth that gathers all these realities into one living experience: abiding in Christ.

Abiding is not a spiritual technique, nor is it a discipline to be mastered. It is the natural state of those who live in union with Christ rather than by their own effort. Jesus does not present abiding in Him as an advanced stage of discipleship, reserved for the mature. He presents it as the only ground upon which fruit can exist. *"Apart from Me you can do nothing."* This is not a rebuke; it is a revelation. It tells us where life flows — and where it does not.

The image Jesus uses is deliberately simple: a branch and a vine. A branch does not strive to bear fruit. It does not concentrate, exert itself, or analyze its progress. It remains a branch. Its fruitfulness is not the result of activity, but of connection. The branch bears fruit precisely because it does *not* live independently. Its life is drawn continuously from the vine.

In the same way, abiding in Christ is not something the believer *does* in addition to living; it is the way the believer lives. It is the quiet, ongoing recognition that Christ is the source of life, strength, wisdom, and direction. When the believer abides, he ceases to live from self-reference. He no longer asks first, *"What do I think?"* or *"What should I do?"* but learns to live from the inward awareness of Christ's indwelling presence.

This is where many misunderstand abiding, reducing it to conscious effort — trying to feel close to Christ, trying to maintain spiritual awareness, or trying to hold on to a sense of peace. But abiding is not maintained by effort; it is accepted as reality. It is not something the believer holds onto; it is something he rests in. Christ is not distant, waiting to be accessed. He is present, waiting to be trusted.

Abiding flows naturally from the truths we have already seen. If the old life has ended, and a new life has emerged in Christ, there is no other source from which to live but Christ. If the believer has been raised with Christ, there is no need to draw from past resources. If the believer is complete in Christ, there is no lack that requires supplementation. Abiding, then, is simply the posture of remaining where God has placed us — in Christ.

Fruitfulness follows inevitably. Jesus does not command fruit; He promises it. *"He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit."* The fruit is not specified because it is comprehensive. It includes Christ's character, Christ's love, Christ's obedience, Christ's compassion, Christ's power expressed through ordinary lives. The branch does not choose the fruit; the life determines it.

This truth frees the believer from anxiety about productivity in discipleship. When fruit becomes the focus, pressure to produce follows. When abiding becomes the focus, fruit

follows. The Spirit gently directs attention away from outcomes and to life. Where life flows freely, fruit appears in its season.

Abiding also brings clarity in moments of weakness or dryness. When the believer feels empty, tired, or unsure, the temptation is to strive harder or withdraw inwardly. Abiding invites a different response—not striving but waiting. Not retreating into self but resting in Christ. The branch does not detach when the season changes; it remains.

Here, the Spirit teaches the disciple a deeply counter-religious lesson: faithfulness is not measured by zealousness, but by continuance. Not by how fervently we try, but by how steadfastly we remain. Abiding is steady, unremarkable, and often unnoticed — yet it is the most fruitful life there is.

Abiding in Christ makes discipleship simple. Life is no longer lived in cycles of effort and exhaustion, success and discouragement. It takes on a steady rhythm of dependence and trust. Christ becomes not only the object of devotion, but the very environment in which life is lived and sustained productively.

This is the heart of our union with Christ. Not visiting Christ but dwelling in Him. Not drawing near occasionally but remaining continuously. Not acting for Him but living through Him.

Personal Exhortation

Remain here for a while without trying to *practice* abiding. Simply notice where your life has been drawing its strength — not from effort, emotion, understanding, but from quiet trust in Christ.

Do not strive to stay connected. Trust that you already are. Let your heart rest in the truth that Christ abides in you, and you in Him. As you remain there, allow the Spirit to awaken your consciousness of what abiding is like in the ordinary moments of life.

Day16 — Not in the Flesh, but in the Spirit: The New Realm of Life

Scripture: "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you" (Romans 8:9).

Meditation

One of the most liberating declarations in all of Scripture is often one of the least fully believed: *"You are not in the flesh."* Many believers read this verse as an exhortation or an ideal, something to aspire to through discipline or growth. But Paul presents it as a statement of fact, grounded in a single condition: *"if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you."* Where the Spirit dwells, the realm of life has changed.

To be "in the flesh" does not simply mean to be sinful or immoral. It describes an entire mode of existence — life lived from the resources of fallen humanity, governed by self-effort, self-consciousness, and self-direction. The flesh may appear religious, disciplined, or morally serious, yet it remains incapable of pleasing God because it operates independently of Him, void of His life, which is spiritual life. Scripture is uncompromising here: *"Those who are in the flesh cannot please God"* (Romans 8:8). This is not a criticism; it is a diagnosis.

But Paul does not leave the believer under diagnosis. He announces the remedy. *"You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you."* This is not because the believer has mastered spiritual living, but because the Spirit of God has taken up residence within. The indwelling Spirit marks a transfer of realm. The believer has been relocated — from the sphere of self-life to the sphere of divine life.

This relocation is not gradual. It is not the result of progress. It is the immediate outcome of union with Christ. When Christ died, rose, and was glorified, He became *"the life-giving Spirit"* (1 Corinthians 15:45). To receive Christ is to receive His Spirit. And where His Spirit dwells, a new governing principle is established — *"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ"* (Romans 8:2).

The Scripture affirms with clarity that *"those who are in Christ"* — walking in union with Christ—"do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" liberates them "from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:1-2).

This is why discipleship cannot be reduced to managing the flesh. The flesh is not something to be trained or refined; it is something to be left behind. God has not given the believer the Spirit to help the flesh behave better, but to live and walk in an entirely different life — life in Christ. The believer does not overcome the flesh by opposing it directly, but by living from another source altogether, the life-giving Spirit in Christ.

Living in the Spirit does not mean heightened emotional experiences or sporadic spiritual sensations. It means living in absolute dependence on the Spirit of Christ rather than on self. It is the quiet, inward orientation toward God as life, strength, and wisdom. The Spirit does not compete with the flesh; He replaces it as the governing power of life.

This truth removes a great deal of confusion in discipleship. Many who profess to be believers confess of feeling torn between two lives — the flesh and the Spirit — as though

they must constantly choose which one will win. But Scripture does not say the believer lives in two realms. It says he has been transferred into the Spirit realm. The conflict many feel is not between two equal powers, but between God's declaration and lingering habits of self-reference.

To walk in the Spirit, therefore, is not to suppress the flesh, but to agree that God has placed you in the Spirit and you are not in the flesh. We walk in the Spirit when we live in alignment with where God has put us. We walk in the Spirit when we draw our responses, decisions, and confidence from the life of Christ within, rather than from the self we once were.

This is why Scripture can say, *"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"* (Galatians 5:25). Living precedes walking. Being precedes doing. The Spirit is not a tool for moral improvement; He is the very life of the new creation. As the believer trusts the Spirit's indwelling presence, the outward walk reflects the inward reality. The Christian life was never meant to be lived by fleshly resources. It was meant to be lived by the Spirit — God Himself, living His life within His people.

Personal Exhortation

Remain quietly with this truth before God. You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. Without striving to change anything, gently align your heart with God's declaration: You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. Let this truth settle. As it does, allow your confidence to rise fully the Spirit's indwelling life.

Day 17 — Glowing Lights in a Crooked and Perverse World

Scripture: "So that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15).

Meditation

When the Spirit establishes truth within, He does not do so merely for inward assurance; He does so for manifestation. Yet this manifestation is never something the believer is asked to produce. It is something that emerges naturally when Christ is allowed to live freely within. Light does not strive to shine. It shines because it is light.

True Christian discipleship is not concerned first with impact, influence, or visibility. It is concerned with having the life of Christ. For where the life of Christ is present and unhindered, expression follows. This is why Scripture speaks of believers as those who *shine* as lights, not as those who are commanded to shine. The shining is the consequence of union with Christ, not the product of discipline.

The world into which this light shines is described without softness: "crooked and perverse." Darkness is not merely moral failure; it is life lived apart from God. It is humanity attempting to define itself, sustain itself, and direct itself without reference to its Creator. Against such darkness, God does not send arguments, programs, or religious systems. He sends His own life expressed through those who are in union with His Son.

This is where discipleship is often misunderstood. Many assume that to influence the world, one must become more forceful, more assertive, or more strategic. But Scripture presents a different way. Light does not confront darkness by force; it dispels it by presence. Where Christ is manifested, darkness loses its hold — not because it is attacked, but because it cannot remain.

The believer's calling, therefore, is not to *try* to be light, but to *allow* the Light to be expressed. This requires neither self-confidence nor self-effacement, but self-forgetfulness. When the believer becomes preoccupied with how he appears, the flow of life is hindered. But when attention remains on Christ as life, expression becomes effortless and authentic.

Philippians 2 situates this shining within the context of Christ's own self-emptying. Jesus did not assert Himself into visibility; He humbled Himself into manifestation. The Light of the world was revealed not through display, but through surrender to God's will. In the same way, Christ is manifested in His disciples not through self-assertion, but through His disciples' yieldedness to Him.

This guards us from a subtle danger: the desire to be effective rather than faithful to our union with Christ. Effectiveness measured by human standards often leads to striving, comparison, and pressure. Faithfulness to our union with Christ leads to rest, authenticity, and enduring fruit. The light that shines from union carries a different quality — it is gentle, pure, steady, and unmistakably divine.

It is also important to see that shining as light does not mean living without difficulty, opposition, or misunderstanding. Light is most visible in darkness, and darkness does not always welcome exposure. Yet the believer does not engage the world from aggressiveness, defensiveness, or fear. His confidence rests not in acceptance by the world, but in the life of Christ within. Christ does not require approval to be expressed.

This manifestation is not selective. It flows into ordinary life — relationships, conversations, decisions, and quiet acts of love. The believer does not need to manufacture opportunities to shine. Where Christ lives freely, His nature becomes visible: patience instead of reactivity, love instead of self-preservation, truth instead of pretence.

Here, the question is not, *"How can I represent Christ better?"* but *"Is Christ living through me?"* The first leads to performance; the second leads to manifestation. The first focuses on self; the second rests in union with Him.

As the believer abides in Christ, the Light that Christ is becomes evident — not loudly, not theatrically, but unmistakably. Others may not immediately understand it, but they will recognize its difference. This is how the Kingdom advances — not by force, but by the life and light of Christ within God's people; not by persuasion, but by divine presence.

Personal Exhortation

Remain for a while with this truth before God. Gently notice where you may have been trying to *shine* rather than simply abiding in Christ. Release any pressure to be effective, impressive, or visible.

Turn your attention to Christ as your life. As you rest there, trust that His light will find its expression in His way and in His time. Do not hurry the process. Light shines naturally.

Day 18 — Walking in Obedience: God Working in Us to Will and Do

Scripture: "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

Meditation

Few words have carried more weight — and more misunderstanding — in Christianity than the word *obedience*. For many, it evokes effort, vigilance, and the constant fear of falling short. Obedience is often imagined as something demanded by God and supplied by human resolve. Yet Scripture gently overturns this picture and reveals obedience as something far more profound and restful: the outworking of God's own life within the believer.

When Paul writes that God *works in us both to will and to do*, he is not describing divine assistance added to human effort. He is describing divine initiative at the very source of desire and action. Obedience, in this light, does not begin with the believer deciding to comply; it begins with God Himself fostering His will within the believer. The impulse toward obedience is not generated by self-discipline, but by indwelling presence of God in the believer.

This is why obedience cannot be separated from union with Christ. Apart from union with Christ, obedience becomes external and burdensome — something imposed upon the self. Within union with Christ, obedience becomes internal and organic — something that flows naturally from life of Christ within the believer. Christ does not merely instruct the disciple from afar; He lives within the disciple, expressing His own obedience through that life.

Jesus Himself lived this way. He said, *"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do"* (John 5:19). His obedience was not the suppression of personal will in favour of divine command; it was the expression of a will perfectly united with the Father's will. The Son lived by participation in the Father's life, not by His own performance. This same pattern now becomes the pattern of the believer's life in Christ.

Here the Spirit frees the believer from a hidden anxiety: the fear of failing to obey. As long as obedience is seen as something we must produce, fear remains. But when obedience is recognized as the fruit of God's work within, fear gives way to trust. The believer's confidence rests not in personal consistency, but in God's faithfulness to work in him both to will and to do.

This does not lead to carelessness or passivity. Rather, it produces attentiveness. The believer is made to be sensitive and responsive not to rules, but to the life-giving voice of God. Jesus said: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27).

In this light, obedience in Christian discipleship is not about meeting expectations; it is about responding to the Christ-life's movement within the believer. The Spirit does not coerce; He induces. He does not drive; He leads. Where He leads, the believer follows — not as duty, but in union with Christ.

It is important to see that this kind of obedience often unfolds quietly. It may not always feel dramatic or heroic. Often it appears in small acts of yielding, gentle restraint, or quiet

faithfulness. Yet its power lies precisely in this simplicity. It is obedience that springs from rest in Christ, not from strain.

This understanding also protects the believer from pride. If obedience flows from God's working, there is no ground for boasting. The believer can neither take credit for obedience nor condemn himself for weakness. Both pride and despair are displaced by humility and trust. The believer learns to say, with increasing confidence, *"Not I, but Christ."*

Discipleship, then, becomes a life of cooperation only in the sense of consent to God's work within. The believer's role is not to initiate obedience, but to yield to moving of the Spirit within him.

Obedience in true Christian discipleship walking in union with Christ. It is the deep assurance that God's will is not something external to be chased, but something internal to be lived by the life of Christ within. The disciple does not strive to obey Christ; he lets Christ obey the Father within him.

Personal Exhortation

Pause here and allow the Spirit to enlighten your understanding of obedience as yielding to the working of God in you to will and do what pleases Him. Turn your attention inward to the life of Christ dwelling within you. Trust Him to foster His will in you and to express it through you. Remain attentive rather than anxious, responsive rather than driven. This is obedience that flows from walking in union with Christ — quiet, faithful, and pleasing to God.

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Day 19 — Ministry from Union with Christ, Not by Human Effort

Scripture: "It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master." (Matthew 10:25).

Meditation

Ministry occupies a central place in Christian discipleship, yet it is also one of the most misunderstood aspects of the Christian life. Too often, ministry is viewed as the price we pay for discipleship, the labor demanded of those who follow Christ. In such a framework, ministry easily becomes burdensome, exhausting, and zealously competitive. But Jesus reveals something altogether different. He does not call His disciples to *perform* service for Him, but to *share* in His own life as the Servant.

When Scripture speaks of a disciple being "like his teacher," it is not referring merely to imitation of outward actions. It speaks of the disciple sharing in the life, spirit, and nature of his teacher. Jesus did not serve by drawing from human energy or religious obligation. He served by living the life of the Father. He stated plainly: "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner" (John 5:19). He served because the Father's life flowed freely through Him.

This is the pattern now given to the disciple. Ministry is not something added on top of union with Christ; it is one of the ways union with Christ expresses itself. When Christ lives freely within, His servant-heart becomes visible. Compassion flows without calculation. Love moves without condition. Giving occurs without constraint. Service ceases to be a role and becomes a manifestation of His life in His disciples.

Here the Spirit dismantles a subtle but incorrect assumption: that serving God requires self-sacrifice sustained by personal strength. In the old order — the old Adamic order — self strives to expend itself for God, drawing from its own resolve and endurance. But the Cross has ended that order. For the true Christian disciple, the self is not the source of life or service.

In the new order, ministry is not the believer exhausting himself for Christ; it is Christ expressing His life through the believer. The disciple does not serve by drawing from a personal reservoir of strength, but by abiding in Christ and drawing from the life of Christ in him.

This is why Jesus invites "all who labour and are heavy laden" to come to Him for rest assuring that union with Him — being yoked with Him — is not burdensome and makes ministry easy and light (Matthew 11:28-28). Serving in union with Him is easy and light because His inexhaustible life is the strength of the bond and He carries the burden. Ministry in discipleship, therefore, is not sustained by human sacrifice, but by divine strength — the life of Christ flowing through a yielded vessel.

This also means that true ministry does not begin with ability, gifting, or opportunity. It begins with yieldedness to Christ. He knows when to serve, how to serve, and through whom to serve. The disciple need not strive to be useful; usefulness is the natural outcome of Christ's life finding expression in him.

Such ministry is marked by humility — not a cultivated humility that tries to appear small, but the humility of Christ Himself. The Servant does not seek position, control, or visibility. He moves quietly, often unnoticed, yet His presence leaves life — the life of Christ — in its wake. This is the ministry that bears the fragrance of Christ rather than the strain of human effort.

Importantly, this understanding frees the believer from guilt-driven service. The disciple no longer serves to prove devotion or to secure approval. He serves because the life of Christ within him flows that way. And when the Spirit restrains rather than sends, the disciple pauses peacefully. Union with Christ controls not only when to act, but when to refrain.

Here again, discipleship is rescued from performance. Ministry is no longer measured by activity, but by life. The question is not, *"Am I doing enough?"* but, *"Is Christ free to express Himself?"* Where He is free, service takes its proper shape—sometimes visible, sometimes hidden, always life-giving.

As this truth settles, service becomes joy rather than duty, privilege rather than pressure. The disciple discovers that he is not trying to serve like Jesus; he is allowing Jesus the Servant to live and serve through him.

Personal Exhortation

Remain for a while with this truth before God. With your heart lifted toward Christ, the Servant living within you, welcome Him as the One who determines your doing and your restraint. Trust Him to express His life through you in His way and time. Stay here quietly, conscious that the true source of your ministry is your walk in union with Christ.

Day 20 — Not I, but Christ: Walking in Union with Christ

Scripture: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

Meditation

All that the Spirit has unfolded throughout these days now gathers into one luminous reality: true Christian discipleship is not a life we live *for* Christ, but a life Christ lives *in* and *through* us. The words "Not I, but Christ" are not a slogan, nor a religious mantra, nor a spiritual aspiration. They are a divine testimony — the simple, profound description of a life that has passed in union with Christ through death, burial, and resurrection and emerged into the life of Christ.

This confession marks the end of all substitutes for discipleship. It brings to rest every form of religious striving, self-improvement, and self-management. When Paul declares, "It is no longer I who live," he is speaking of displaced centrality. The self has lost its throne. Christ has taken His rightful place as reigning life in him.

Here we see clearly that discipleship is not a progressive replacement of the old self with a better self. It is the unveiling of a life that has already replaced the old. The Cross did not weaken the self; it ended it. Resurrection did not revive the old man; it introduced a new Man. And union with Christ did not create cooperation between two lives: it established participation in one life — the life of Christ Himself.

"Not I, but Christ" means that the believer no longer lives from self-origin. Thoughts, decisions, obedience, service, endurance, and love no longer flow from an independent center called "me." They flow from Christ, who indwells the believer by His Spirit. This does not make the believer passive or inactive; it quickens or activates the believer by a new source — Christ, the life-giving Spirit. Activity now proceeds from the life of Christ, not human effort. Expression flows from union with Christ, not human intention.

This is where discipleship becomes beautifully normal. The life of Christ does not wait for special moments to express itself. It reveals itself in daily responses — in patience where patience is needed, in love where love is to be shown, in trust where insecurity threatens. The believer does not try to manifest Christ; Christ manifests Himself as the believer rests in union with him.

Walking in union with Christ is characterized by a holy simplicity. It is not a fragmented lifestyle — one life for God, another for daily living. There is only one life now, lived everywhere. Christ is not compartmentalized into religious and secular; He is present in work, leisure, worship, business, meals, fasting, recreation, prayer, relationships, communication, silence, health, suffering, joy and sorrow. Discipleship is not something we *do*; it is who we *are* in Christ. It is Christ living in us.

Here the Spirit gently seals the entire journey:

- The self-life has ended.
- The old man has been buried.

- Resurrection life has been given.
- Completeness in Christ has been secured.
- Abiding in Christ has been established.
- The leading of the Spirit accepted.
- Sonship governs the believer's walk.
- Union with Christ is expressed in discipleship.

And now, all of this is lived out and defined in a single, quiet declaration: **Christ lives in me.** This declaration shields the believer from both pride and despair. There is no pride, because the life is not his. There is no despair, because the life is the resurrection life of Christ. Faith becomes simple — not believing we can live the Christian life, but believing that Christ already lives His life in us.

Thus, this devotional journey does not end with instruction, but with rest. Not with resolve, but with assurance. Not with a call to do more, but with an invitation to live from what God has already done.

This is the life to which disciples are called.
This is the life the Gospel produces.
This is the life the Spirit faithfully reveals.

Personal Exhortation

Pause here, not to conclude, but to ponder. Let the Spirit gently gather all that has been revealed into a single awareness of you walking in union with Christ in discipleship. Release every lingering impulse to manage, measure, or improve yourself. Let the confession "Not I, but Christ" settle— — not as a statement you repeat, but as ~~a~~the life you ~~inhabit~~now live.

From here, continue walking — not striving to live this life, but fully trusting the One who already lives in you. Let this be the ground on which you walk each day in union with Christ.

Day 21 — Discipleship and God's Eternal Purpose

Scripture: "Having made known to us the mystery of His will… that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth — in Him" (Ephesians 1:9–10).

Meditation

Now that the Spirit has led the believer fully into newness of life that defines true Christian discipleship, one final veil must be lifted.

Why has God done all this? Why the Cross? Why the burial? Why the resurrection? Why union with Christ? Why this new creation life?

The answer is not found in the believer himself. It is found in God's eternal purpose.

From eternity, before sin entered the world and before redemption was needed, God already had a design. Scripture calls it "the mystery of His will." This purpose is not centered in man, but in His Son.

God's intention purposed in Himself according to the counsel of His own will before the foundation of the world is clearly stated in the Scripture: "that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth — in Him."

This gathering all things together in Christ includes not only redeemed people, not only the Church, but all things in heaven and on earth. Christ is not only Savior of mankind, but He is also Center of the universe. He is not only Life to the believer, but also the Head of all creation.

And now we see the meaning of discipleship in its highest dignity. God has not brought you into union with Christ merely for your own blessing, peace, or victory. He has brought you into union with Christ so that Christ may have a people through whom His life is expressed the heavens and in the earth, as part of God's great work of bringing everything back into harmony under His Son.

For the believer, this truth brings both humility and rest. We discover that our salvation is part of something far greater than ourselves. We are not merely forgiven individuals; we are participants in God's eternal purpose. To belong to Christ is to belong to the centre of all things. To live in Christ is to live already within the movement by which God is bringing the universe to its appointed end.

And it is precisely here that the ministry of reconciliation finds its true meaning in discipleship. "All things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation… that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18–19).

Reconciliation is not only the restoration of the individual sinner to God; it is God's chosen way of gathering the world back to Himself in Christ. We who have been reconciled are

immediately drawn into God's own work of reconciliation through discipleship. We are not only objects of grace; we are instruments of God's eternal purpose.

Through the ministry and message of reconciliation entrusted to us, God continues His great work of drawing men, and through them creation itself, back into living union with Himself in His Son. Thus, walking in union with Christ, the disciple stands within history as both a reconciled one and a reconciling one, bearing in his life and testimony the very movement by which God is summing up all things in Christ.

Here also, discipleship finds greater meaning in the eternal purpose through its manifestation of sonship. The apostle Paul declares that "the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God", and that creation itself "will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:19–21). Here, the gathering together of all things in Christ is seen not only as a future decree, but as a process already advancing through the manifestation of Christ's life in His sons.

Creation is not waiting merely for an event, but for true Christian disciples — a people in whom the life of the Son is openly expressed. It is waiting for men and women who no longer live by Adam's life, but by Christ's life — sons who are already of the new creation in Christ. As the Son of God lives in His disciples and is expressed through their ministry and service, the powers of the coming order quietly enter the present age. The life that will one day renew all things is already at work wherever Christ lives freely in His people.

Thus, the manifestation of the sons of God is not an abstract doctrine, but a living reality within true discipleship. Every life governed by Christ, every act of service flowing from His life, every expression of His nature participates in this great movement by which God is liberating creation and bringing all things into harmony in His Son. Discipleship is therefore not only for the church, but for the world; not only for redemption, but for newness of life; not only for salvation, but for the restoration of all things in Christ.

Personal Exhortation

You are not only a disciple of Christ. You belong to God's eternal purpose. This is where the journey continues. For discipleship is not finally about what you have become, but about what God is accomplishing in His Son who lives in you. And the highest rest of all is to know that to live in union with Christ is to live inside God's eternal purpose.

Let worship be your response. Let rest be your posture. Live not as one striving to serve God, but as one who has been graciously placed inside what God Himself is doing.

About the Devotional, the Author, and the Publisher

About the Devotional

Walking in Union with Christ: A 21-Day Devotional Reflecting on True Christian Discipleship is a spiritually contemplative devotional that presents Christian discipleship as a finished work accomplished in Christ rather than a progressive work achieved by human effort.

Rooted in Scripture and centered on the believer's union with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and indwelling life, this devotional leads the reader step by step into the reality of the new creation. Each day gently unfolds a vital aspect of discipleship — denying self, taking up the Cross, abiding in Christ, living by the Spirit, walking in resurrection life, serving in union with Christ, and manifesting Christ as life — without pressure, technique, or religious performance.

Written for those who desire to go beyond external Christianity into the inward reality of Christ as life, the devotional invites readers to rest in God's finished work and to walk by the indwelling Christ by faith. It is especially suited for believers seeking spiritual depth, clarity, and freedom rooted in the Gospel of grace and the life of sonship.

About the Author

G. A. N. James, PhD has served the Body of Christ for nearly six decades in missionary ministry, pastoral care, teaching, writing, and spiritual counseling, proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom and the present truth of divine sonship across several nations.

Having devoted his life to walking in the Spirit and declaring the revealed Word of God without embellishment or tradition, he now devotes his time to Spirit-guided writing from a quiet place of retreat in Bombo, Uganda. He prefers no religious titles and identifies simply as a brother in Christ, a member of the Body of Christ, called to expound the truths of the new creation, discipleship, divine sonship, the true Church, and the Kingdom of God.

He freely distributes all his writings for the nourishment and edification of God's elect, trusting that the Spirit will carry the message to those appointed to receive it.

About the Publisher

Kingdom Gospel World Mission is a Christ-centered, non-denominational ministry dedicated to proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom and making freely available Spirit-led writings that edify, enlighten, and equip the sons of God worldwide.

This ministry operates entirely by faith and by the gracious guidance of the Holy Spirit. All its publications are offered without cost, in the spirit of Jesus' command: "Freely you have received, freely give."

Contact: kingdomgospelworldmission@gmail.com

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